

A PANORAMA OF THE PROGRESS OF HUMAN LIFE

FASHIONABLY DISPLAYED

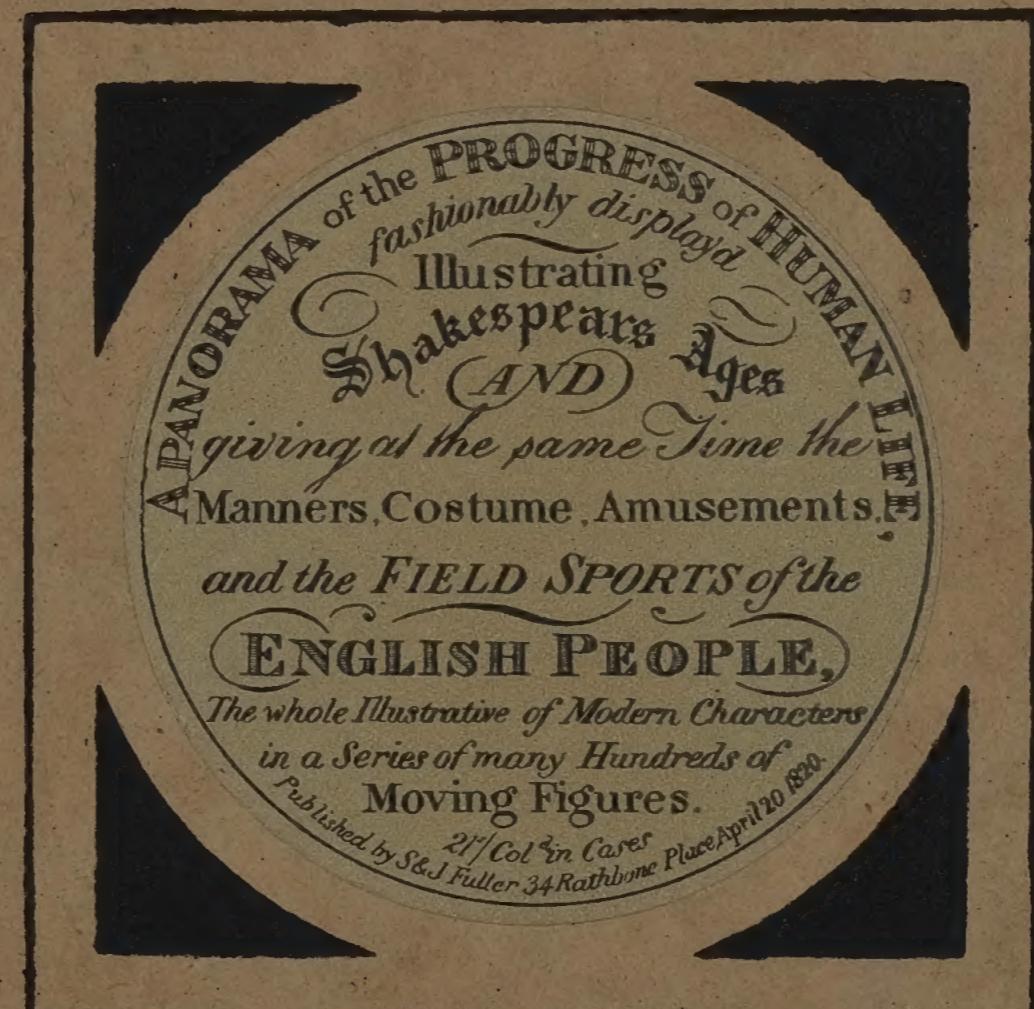
ILLUSTRATING "SHAKESPEARE'S AGES"

AND EXHIBITING THE

MANNERS, COSTUME, CHARACTER AND FIELD SPORTS OF THE ENGLISH PEOPLE

THE WHOLE ILLUSTRATIVE OF MODERN CHARACTER,
IN A SERIES OF MANY HUNDRED MOVING FIGURES

PUBLISHED BY S. AND J. FULLER
34 RATHBONE PLACE

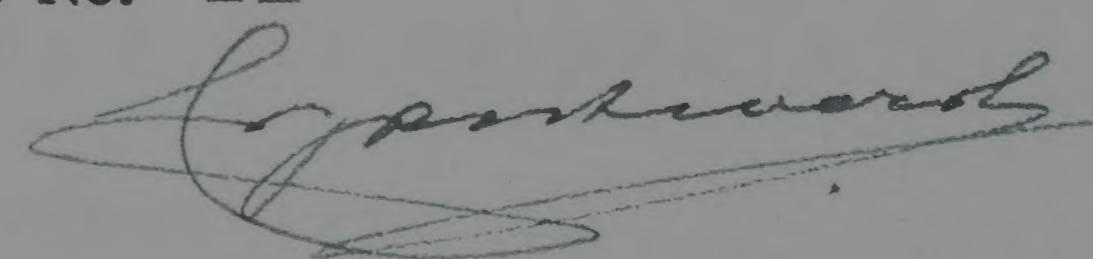


PRIVATELY PRINTED
BY THE AUTHOR OF "HUNTING HAWKING SHOOTING"

1930

FOUR HUNDRED COPIES ONLY OF THIS BOOK HAVE BEEN PRINTED
Nos. 1-250 FOR GREAT BRITAIN
Nos. 251-400 FOR SALE BY ERNEST R. GEE, NEW YORK
AND ALL PLATES HAVE BEEN DESTROYED

THIS COPY IS No. 41

A handwritten signature in cursive ink, appearing to read "Lyndon B. Johnson".

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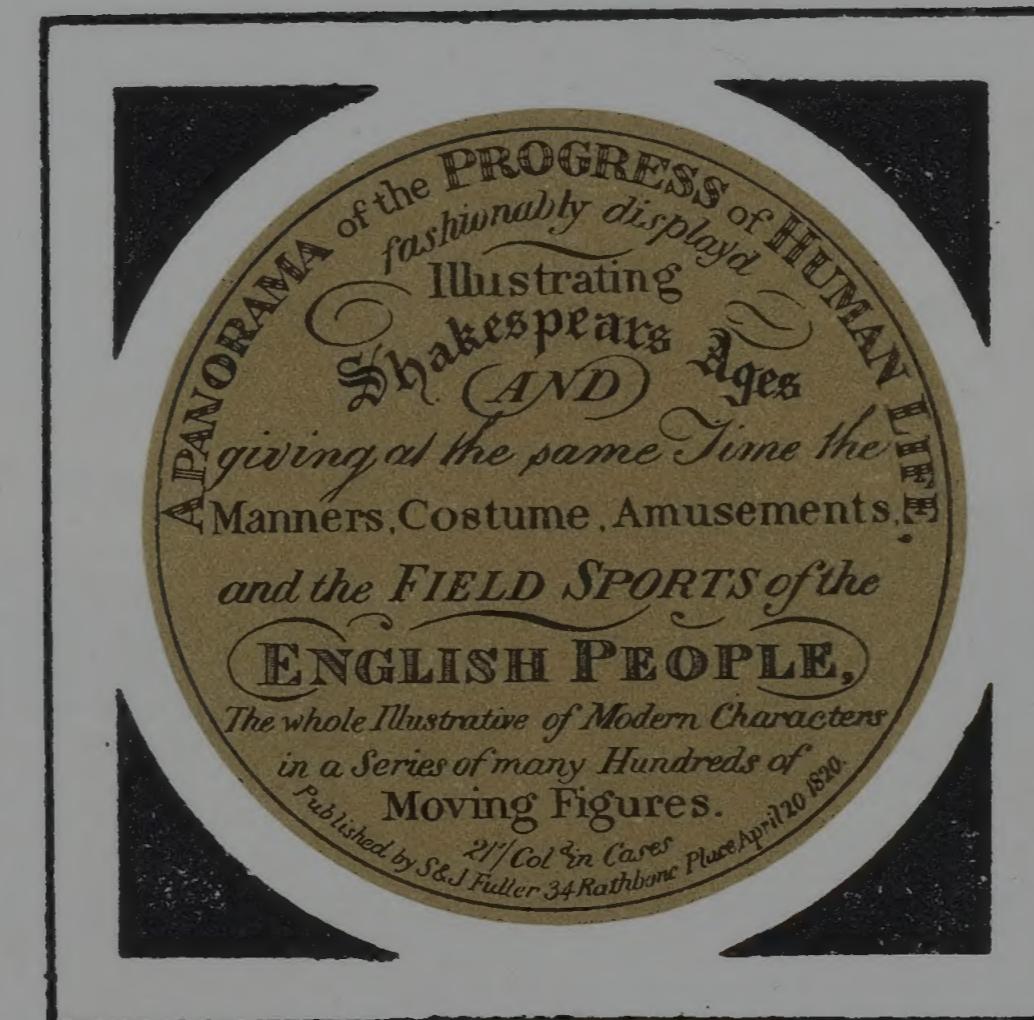
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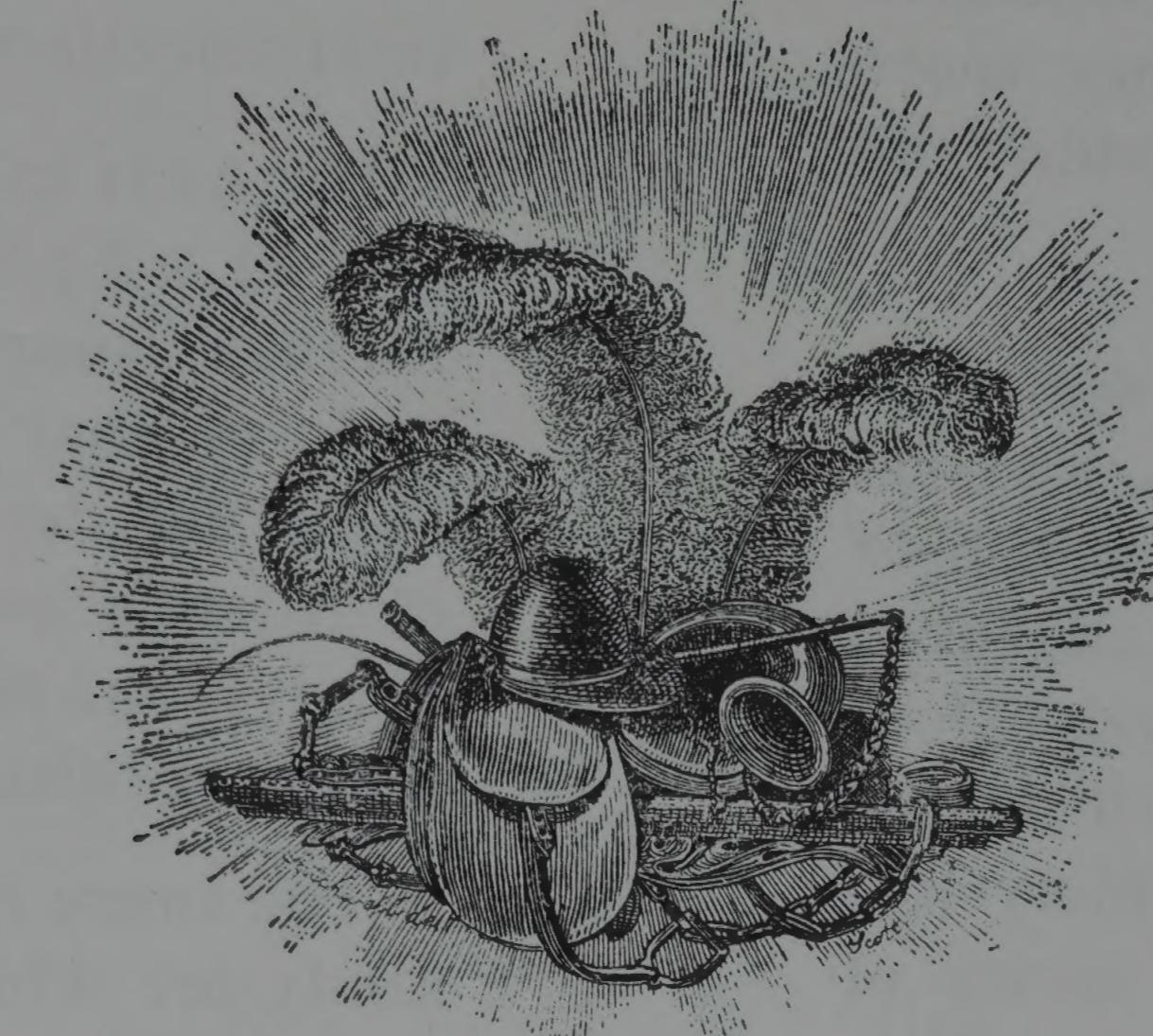
1930

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LONDON



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PREFACE

IN a little corner of an insignificant drab wrapper entitled "Alken's New Sketch Book," 1823, the writer found the following advertisements:—

A PANORAMIC VIEW OF A TRIP TO MELTON-MOWERAY; or, An Essay on Fox-Hunting: giving at one View all the Points of a Fox-Chase, the Starting from the Top of St. James's-street, to the Return Home from the Hunt. Etched by HENRY ALKEN, from the original drawings by JOHN DEAN PAUL, Esq. 21 feet long. Fitted up with a roller in box. Price 42s. or mounted as a Series of Drawings, 2l. 10s.

Panorama of THE PROGRESS OF HUMAN LIFE, fashionably displayed, illustrating SHAKSPEARE's "Ages," and exhibiting the Manners, Costume, Character, and Field Sports of the English People; the whole illustrative of Modern Character, in a Series of many Hundred moving Figures. By the Author of "Going to Epsom Races." 15 feet long. 21s. coloured, in cases.

Both these panoramic views were the work of HENRY ALKEN, but while the well-known set of hunting prints was engraved by him after drawings by John Dean Paul, which must have undergone considerable improvements in Alken's hands, there is every reason to believe that the "Panorama of the Progress of Human Life" was entirely Alken's own conception. He drew it unfettered by any other consideration, to satisfy his eager desire of presenting his friends and admirers with a pictorial life-history of a Country Squire, a circumstance to which may be attributed the glorious result he achieved.

The excuse for this publication is its historical interest, its conspicuous beauty, and its extreme rarity. Collectors may well wonder whether some extraordinary calamity did not befall the original issue for, apart from the writer's own copy, only one other complete specimen has come to his notice during the forty-five years that he has been collecting.

This copy is now in the collection of Mr. Alfred B. Maclay of New York who has been kind enough to send the writer a photograph of the roller box which encloses it, a reproduction of which appears on page 10. The title printed thereon is as follows:—

A Panorama of Human Life. Published by S. & J. Fuller, Rathbone Place, London. Price £1. 1s. 0d.

The inscription on the writer's box reads:—

The Review. London, Published by J. Hudson, 85 Cheapside.
(See "Hunting Hawking Shooting," vol. III., p. 2.)

After a careful study of the scanty material available, it may be concluded that, although "The Review" is one of the important scenes depicted on the roll, this is not its correct title, for it differs from the inscription on a small brown label pasted on the back of both copies of the Panorama, which is reproduced in facsimile on the title-page of this volume.

As may be seen from the advertisement of "A Trip to Melton Mowbray," Alken published his panoramic views either "mounted as a series of drawings" or "on rollers," and the former more synoptical mode has been adopted, as being the one from which the greatest enjoyment can be derived.

The subject chosen by Alken gave him an unprecedented scope for the display of his powers of observation and composition, and his intimate knowledge of the manners, costume, character and field sports of the English people of his time. None of Alken's engraved works, with the exception of "The Life of a Sportsman" and "Jorrocks's Jaunts and Jollities," show such a wealth of detail as the "Panorama of the Progress of Human Life," and the thirty-five little pictures, each treating of a different subject, "in a series of many hundreds of moving figures," as the artist himself describes them, give a more vivid impression of the scenes which he wishes to portray than any in his later publications.

The Panorama was the forerunner of that famous book, "The Life of a Sportsman," which Charles James Apperley, better known as Nimrod, published in 1842 in conjunction with Mr. Ackermann. The text by Nimrod had appeared piecemeal in "The New Sporting Magazine" in 1841, and it was Mr. Ackermann's idea to bring it out with appropriate illustrations. There had been interviews between Nimrod and Ackermann on the subject, and it seems that Alken, by beginning to illustrate the work before it was completed, endeavoured to make Nimrod write the text to his plates. But Alken was soon deprived of this liberty. In a letter to his publisher, dated March 24th 1837 (see "Life and Writings of Nimrod" by R. S. Surtees in Ainsworth's Magazine, 1846, vol. IX., p. 313, etc.) Nimrod says:—

"It would be necessary that I should give Mr. Alken some instructions (if he will take them) as to the future plates, for, with all his cleverness, he spoils many from the want of taking time to consider his subjects."

This letter was the beginning of a long correspondence extending over several years, which leaves no room for doubt that both author and publisher of "The Life of a Sportsman" were acquainted with the Panorama. In a letter of February 21st, 1838, Nimrod mentions a large number of scenes which he wishes to introduce, for example, "As a Dragoon," "At Oxford," "As a Coachman," "Cockfighting," "On the Turf," and "Fights a Duel." They were etched by Alken, who was

directed by Nimrod and Ackermann even down to minute details of costume; but a number of them were afterwards rejected when the final selection was made.

Far be it from a collector to belittle such magnificent work as "The Life of a Sportsman," the corner-stone of every important library of English Sporting books of the Nineteenth Century, but the writer believes that he has detected a subtle difference between this great book and the Panorama, which, in his opinion, carries with it more of Alken's personality. "The Life of a Sportsman," on the other hand, is the fruit of the protracted co-operation of three men of widely different talents.

The more one compares Alken's work with that of other artists, a study for which the writer has exceptional opportunities in his own collection, the more one feels impressed with Alken's genius. There is no one, not even Rowlandson, Cruikshank, or Leech, who could displace Alken from his pedestal. These others, though brilliant caricaturists, verged too often on the vulgar and grotesque, whereas Alken sought to express his sense of humour by humorous ideas without the help of caricature. Alken was a hard worker, and he left behind a large quantity of serious works which rank among the foremost sporting pictures of the nineteenth century. True to his origin as a Dane, he was by nature a gentleman and a sportsman, and drew his inspiration from the highest social and sporting circles.

Despite this rare combination of qualities and despite the steadily increasing appreciation which is shown for his works to-day, Alken shared the fate of most sporting artists who lived in the middle of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century, and gained little financial success.

To be of value, prints, or books of prints, must be of the original issue; the idea that one can "pick up" such treasures here and there is a fatal error. To achieve success, the collector should buy little and then only the best, which means the original issues in mint state and in original bindings or wrappers. The latter are in the nature of things very rare, because the wrappers were generally destroyed when the pictures were framed. However, neither the loss of wrappers, interesting as they are on account of the advertisements of other works which they contained, nor the loss of the descriptive text, accounts for the remarkably high prices which such complete sets of prints in their original covers have fetched at sales during recent years. This increase in value is principally due to the fact

that prints which have been kept in their original covers have been protected against the destructive influences of light and damp. All prints that have been framed have suffered from exposure to light, and collectors therefore regard wrappers as a token of fine condition.

To give one instance, the very fine illustrated sporting book of "British Field Sports Illustrated in Twenty beautifully coloured Engravings from designs by S. Howitt," published by Orme in 1807 (see "Hunting Hawking Shooting," vol. II., p. 53) in original boards, has gradually risen in value to a price of four figures. It was always thought to have been issued originally in boards until, in 1927, collectors were surprised by the appearance of a set in ten blue wrappers. The set was sold in July 1927 at Sotheby's sale rooms for £2,600 to Dr. Rosenbach of Philadelphia.

As a guide to collectors, Alken's portrait on the coloured title-page has been surrounded with facsimiles of the original wrappers of some of his most important books. They are reduced to about one-fifth of their actual size, but the exact proportions are retained. A list has been added at the end of this volume giving the exact measurements of wrappers and plates.

The writer hopes that some pleasure will be derived from this reproduction, and that as time passes Alken will be appreciated even more than now, for quite apart from his other great gifts his knowledge of the world conveys valuable lessons. At any rate both Alken and Nimrod believed that their books had something to teach young people.

A letter written by Nimrod to Ackermann, dated 7th March 1838, contains a curious example of his idea of useful instruction for the rising generation:—

" You will perceive my aim is to make 'The Life of a Sportsman' not only amusing but instructive and serviceable to young people in more ways than one."

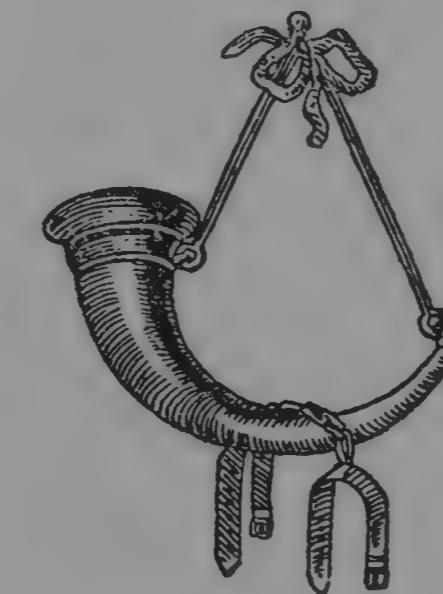
We know that true sportsmanship is a great asset in life, but whether "The Progress of Human Life" will inspire modern youth to do their share in the struggle for existence in this age of depression of trade and overcrowded professions is doubtful.

Probably Alken hit the nail on the head when, under the pseudonym of "Ben Tally-Ho," he wrote the lines on the title-page of a set of prints called "Some do and some do not; it is all a notion."

"IN HUNTING, AS IN LIFE, WE ALL PUSH IT ALONG,
AND STRIVE ALL WE'RE ABLE TO LEAD THE GAY THRONG;
BUT EVEN IN HUNTING *SOME DO AND SOME DON'T*,
FOR I NEVER HEARD ONE, WHO HAD PLUCK, SAY '*I WON'T*'."

C. F. G. R. SCHWERDT.

Old Alresford House,
Alresford, Hants.





THE
PANORAMA

THE NURSERY

FIRST TOYS

LEARNING TO RIDE

UP TO MISCHIEF IN THE KITCHEN

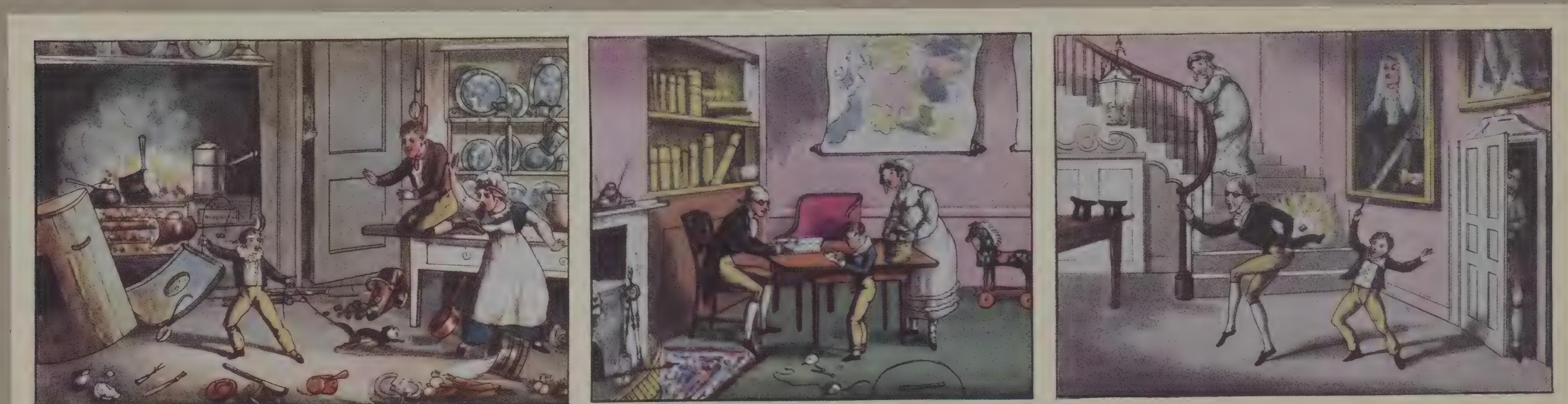
IN THE SCHOOLROOM

PRACTICAL JOKES

HUNTING THE PATERNAL PIG

COLLEGE PRANKS

COLLEGE PRANKS



COLLEGE PRANKS

BEFORE THE VICE-CHANCELLOR

CRAMMING

LOVEMAKING

THE AWAKENING

JOINING THE ARMY

THE DUEL

IN CHAMBERS

WITH THE REGIMENT



THE REVIEW

AT A BALL

DRIVING A GIG

DRIVING A TANDEM

DRIVING FOUR-IN-HAND

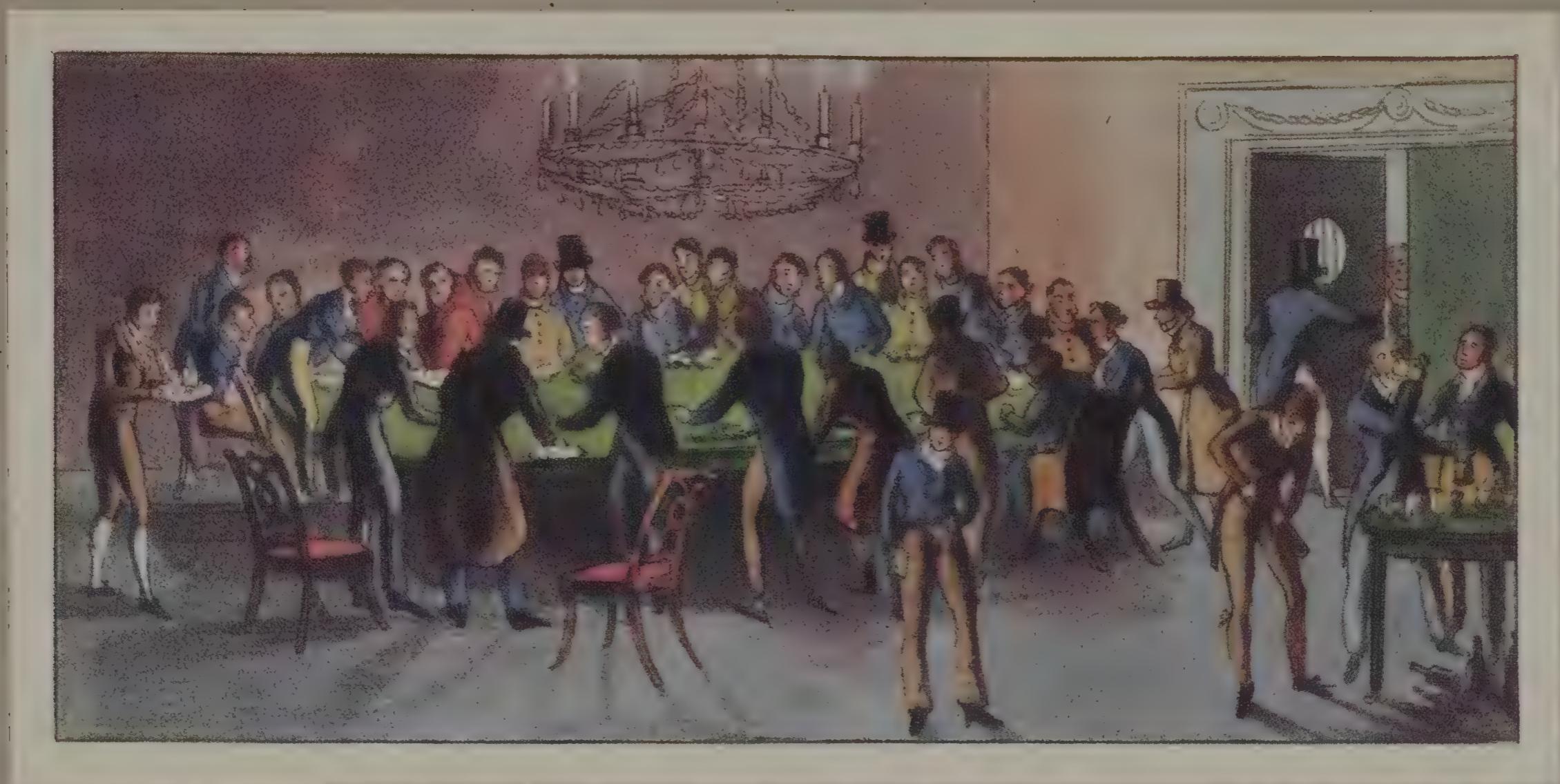
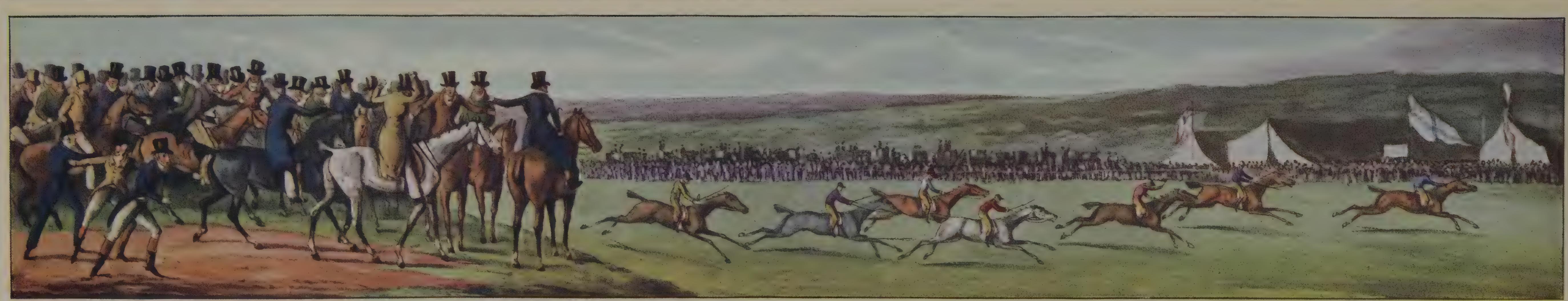
RACING



THE RACE

GAMING

HUNTING



COCK FIGHTING

BOXING

ON THE STOCK EXCHANGE

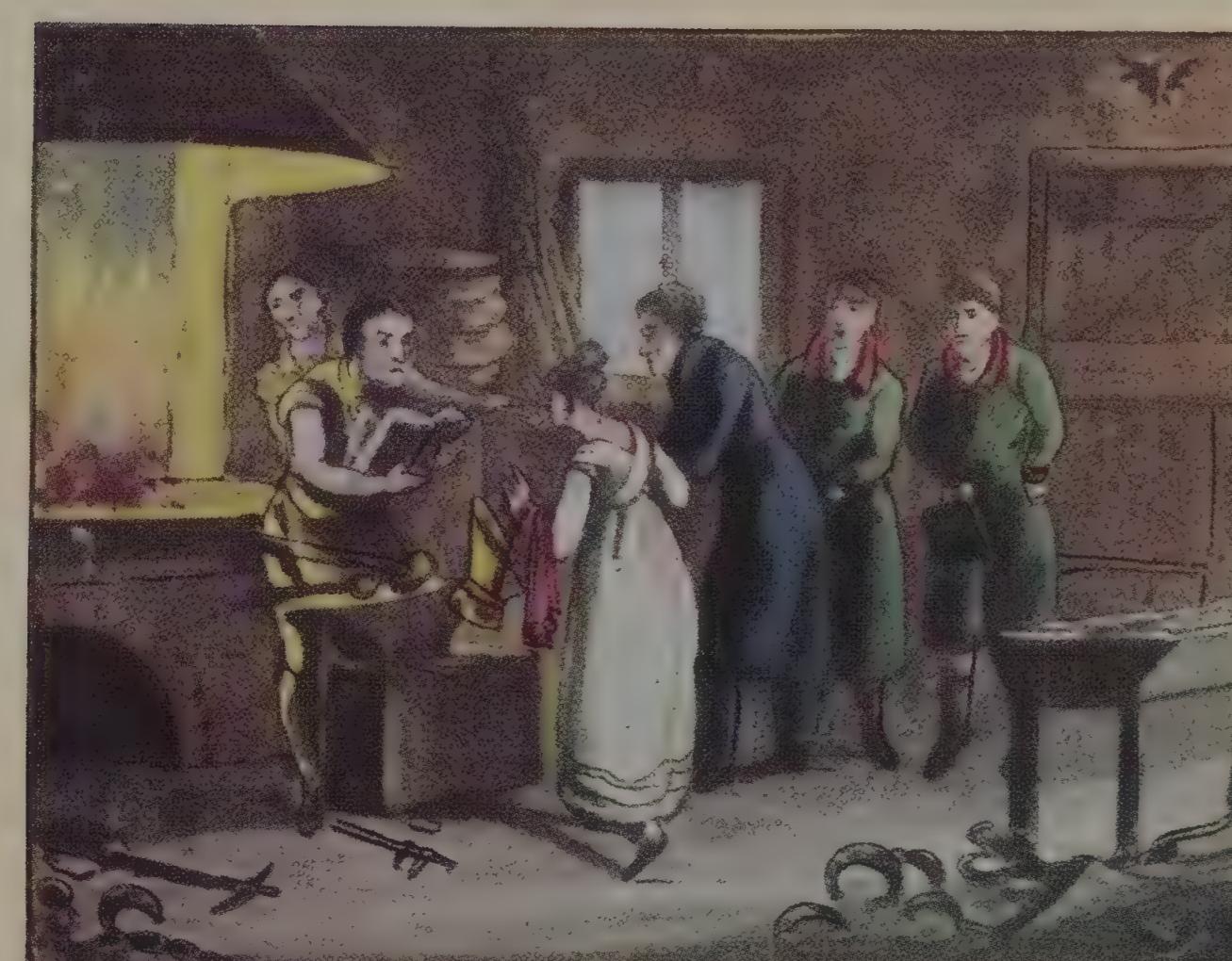
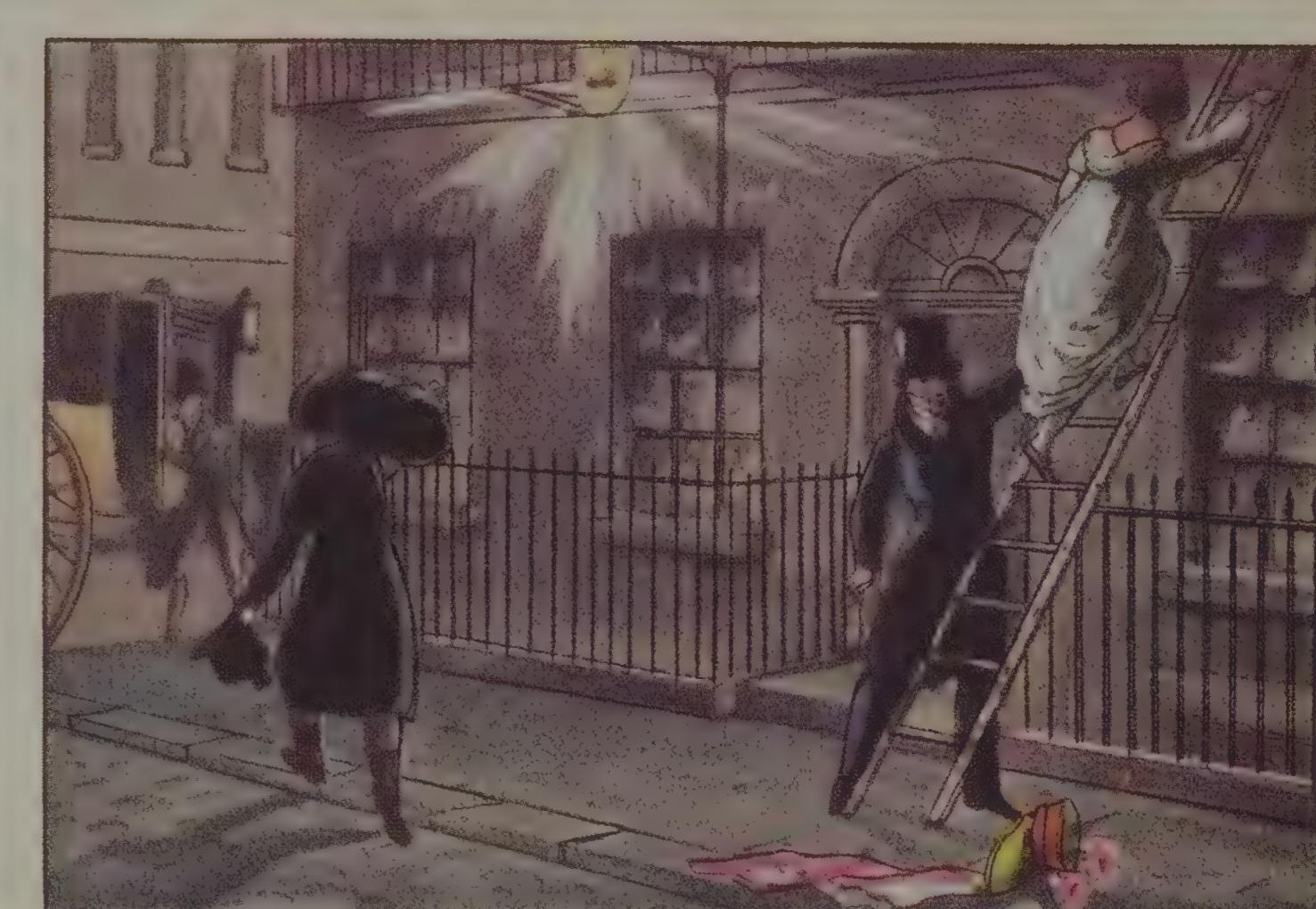
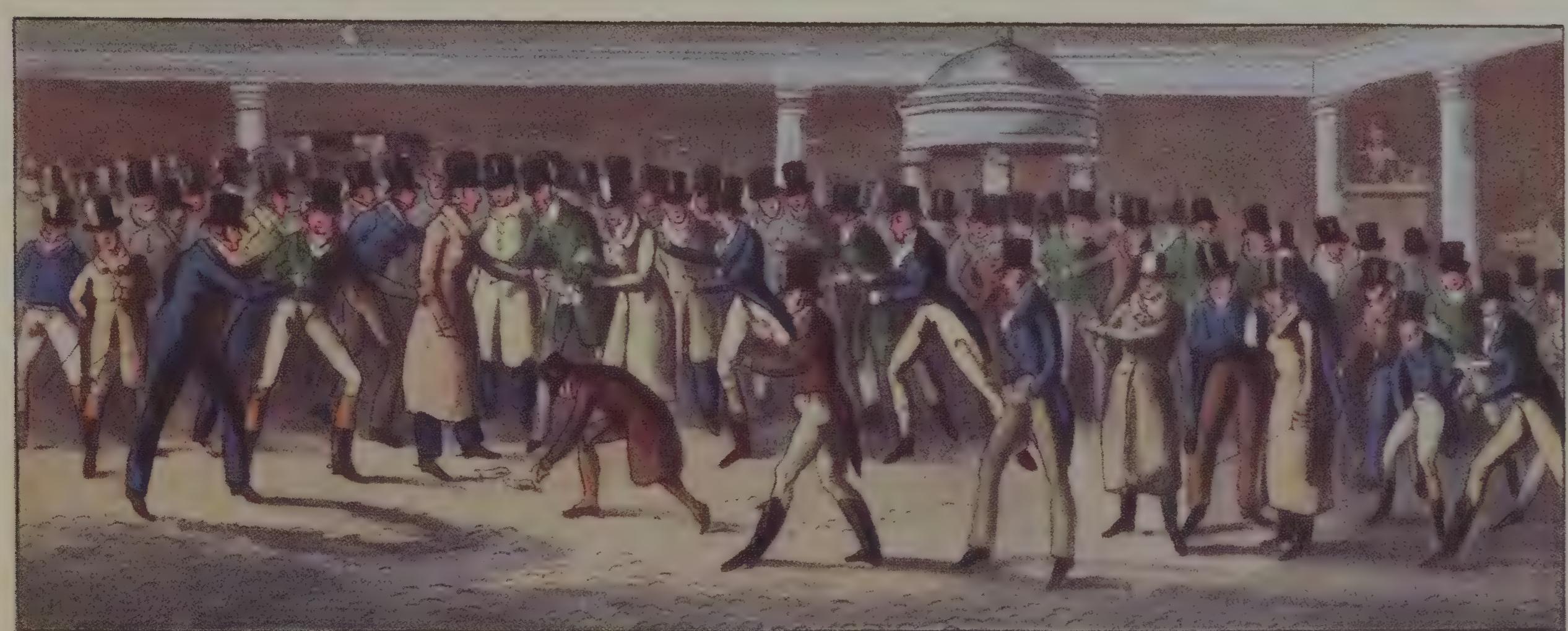
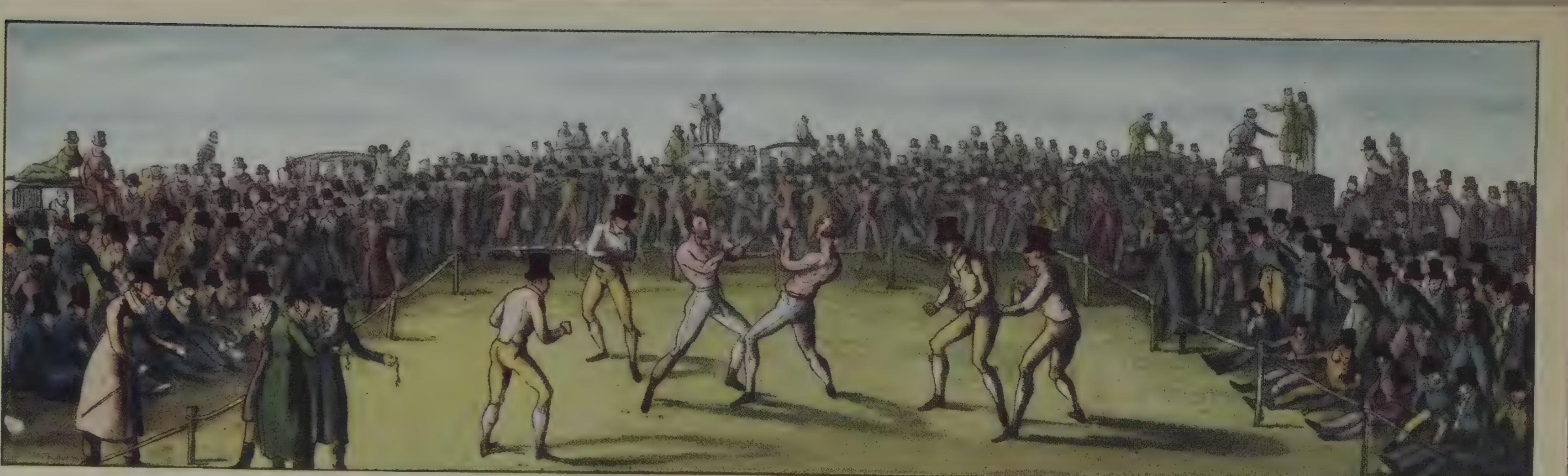
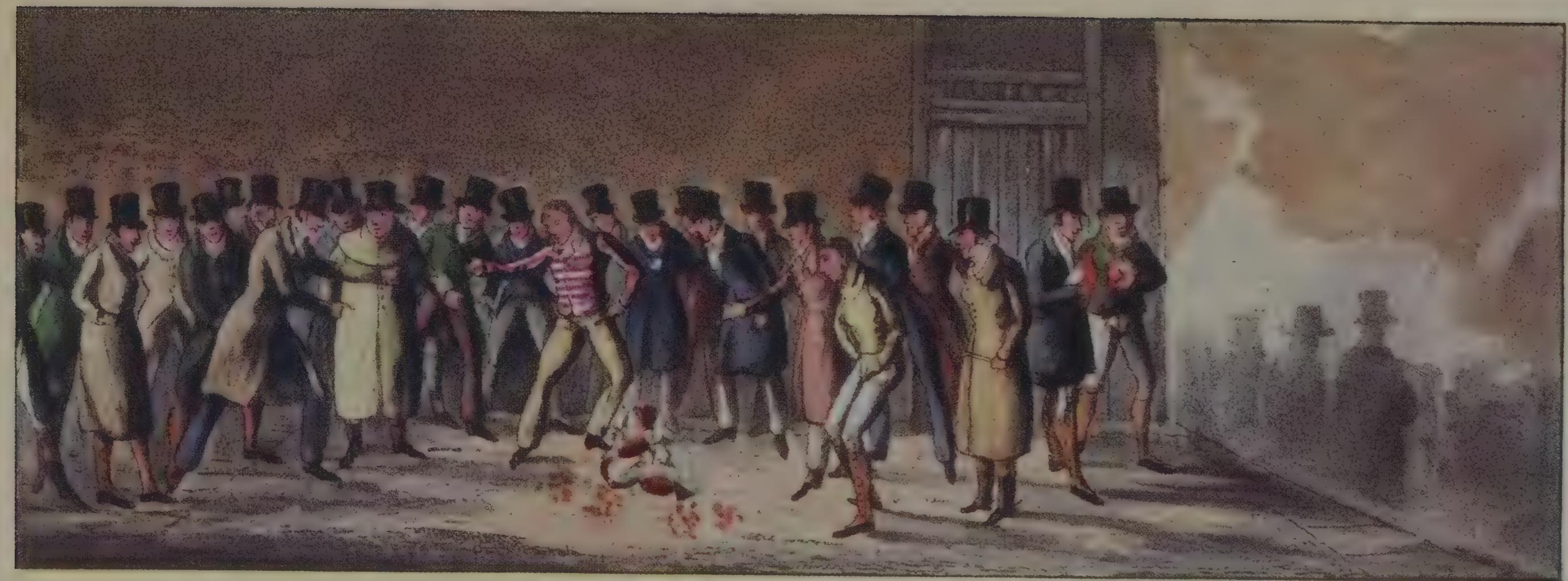
IN GAOL

LIBERATION

GRETNNA GREEN

POLITICAL MEETING

THE FAMILY CIRCLE



ACTUAL MEASUREMENTS OF WRAPPERS SHOWN ON PAGE FIVE

N.B.—THE MEASUREMENTS OF PLATES GIVEN ARE EXCLUSIVE OF EITHER BLANK MARGIN OR INSCRIPTION.

A COCKNEY'S SHOOTING SEASON IN SUFFOLK, 1822.

SIZE OF WRAPPER 37.7×27 cm.

16 pp. LETTERPRESS, AND 6 COLOURED PLATES MEASURING c. 18×25.5 cm.

A FEW IDEAS ; BEING HINTS TO ALL WOULD-BE MELTONIANS, 1825.

SIZE OF WRAPPER 36×27 cm.

6 COLOURED PLATES MEASURING c. 21.5×18 cm.

COMPARATIVE MELTONIANS, 1823.

SIZE OF WRAPPER 33×49 cm.

TITLE, AND 6 COLOURED PLATES MEASURING c. 26.5×36 cm.

SHOOTING, OR ONE DAY'S SPORT OF THREE REAL GOOD ONES, 1823.

SIZE OF WRAPPER 27.8×42 cm.

TITLE, AND 6 COLOURED PLATES MEASURING c. 22.5×32 cm.

THE QUORN HUNT, 1835.

SIZE OF WRAPPER 55×76 cm.

8 COLOURED PLATES MEASURING c. 31.5×51.5 cm.

QUALIFIED HORSES AND UNQUALIFIED RIDERS, 1815.

SIZE OF WRAPPER 28.5×37.5 cm.

FRONTISPICE WITH TITLE, AND 7 COLOURED PLATES MEASURING c. 19×26.8 cm.

HUNTING QUALIFICATIONS, 1829.

SIZE OF WRAPPER 28.5×39.5 cm.

16 pp. LETTERPRESS AND 6 COLOURED PLATES MEASURING c. 17×25.5 cm.

HUNTING, OR SIX HOURS' SPORT, BY THREE REAL GOOD ONES, 1823

SIZE OF WRAPPER 29×42.5 cm.

TITLE, AND 6 COLOURED PLATES MEASURING c. 22×31.5 cm.

SPORTING DISCOVERIES, OR THE MISERIES OF HUNTING, 1816.

SIZE OF WRAPPER 28.3×38.5 cm.

7 COLOURED PLATES MEASURING c. 19×26.5 cm.

THE BEAUFORT HUNT, 1833.

SIZE OF WRAPPER 76.5×56 cm.

COLOURED FRONTISPICE, DEDICATION, AND 8 COLOURED PLATES MEASURING c. 32×52 cm. WITH SUPPLEMENTARY PLATE MEASURING 33×51.5 cm.

THE NIGHT RIDERS OF NACTON, 1839.

SIZE OF WRAPPER 41.5×58.5 cm.

1 LEAF OF LETTERPRESS, AND 4 COLOURED PLATES MEASURING c. 26.8×36.8 cm.

